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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/816,038	03/22/2001	Robert A. Medwick	09785980-0067	6181

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EXAMINER

TILLERY, RASHAWN N

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2612

13

DATE MAILED: 07/09/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/816,038

Applicant(s)

MEDWICK ET AL.

Examiner

Rashawn N Tillery

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 March 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 7-9 and 14-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4-6, 10-13 and 17 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-3 and 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sugimoto (US6195127).

Regarding claims 1 and 7, Sugimoto discloses, in figures 5-9, a method of adjusting image lighting on a preparatory image, comprising:

generating preparatory light for a predetermined preparatory duration (Sugimoto teaches outputting a preliminary light-emission if it is determined that a suitable exposure cannot be obtained; see col. 9, line 26 to col. 11, line 2);

determining an average preparatory image luminance of the preparatory image represented by preparatory image data on the preparatory image data and weighting at least a subset of the preparatory image data (Sugimoto teaches performing a weighting operation on luminance data of a central portion of image data; see col. 11, lines 3-13; and col. 9, lines 1-25); and

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generating a supplemental strobe duration based on the average preparatory image luminance and luminance weightings (Sugimoto teaches calculating a major light-emission based on luminance data and luminance weightings; see col. 11, lines 14-46).

Regarding claims 2 and 8, Sugimoto discloses, in figures 5 and 6, that generating the supplemental strobe duration further comprises:

generating average block luminances for subsets of preparatory image data (Sugimoto teaches generating luminance data);

applying the luminance weightings to at least a subset of the average block luminances to generate weighted average block luminance (Sugimoto teaches applying weighting amount data luminance data in a center of a screen); and

determining the average image luminance based on the weighted average block luminance (see col. 6, line 3 to col. 7, line 21).

Regarding claims 3 and 9, Sugimoto discloses, in figure 1, the luminance weightings are stored in a weighting table (28, 30) and the applying further comprises:

accessing the weighting table to retrieve respective luminance weightings corresponding to portions of the preparatory image (see col. 6, lines 17-67); and

multiplying the average block luminance by the respective luminance weightings to provide the average weighted block luminance (see col. 6, lines 17-67).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sugimoto in view of Sugahara et al (US5987261).

Regarding claim 14, Sugimoto discloses, in figure 1, a digital imaging system comprising:

a processor (32) electrically connected to a strobe (38); and
an image sensor (12).

Sugimoto does not expressly disclose a memory for storing a supplemental strobe duration. Sugahara teaches a strobe device for generating a fixed amount of preparatory light a plurality of times to set an amount of actual light to be generated during photographing. Sugahara reveals that it is well known in the art to store the time of the actual light in a LUT (see col. 4, lines 1-33). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Sugimoto's device by implementing Sugahara's teachings in an effort to consistently and quickly obtain an appropriate amount of light.

Regarding claim 15, Sugimoto discloses, in figures 5 and 6, the processor divides the preparatory image data into subsets and generates average block

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luminances for each subset and applies the luminance weightings to at least a subset of the average block luminances, resulting in weighted average block luminance used to derive the weighted average block luminance (see col. 6, line 3 to col. 7, line 21).

Regarding claim 16, Sugimoto discloses, in figure 1, a weighting table (28, 30) that stores the luminance weighting.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 4-6, 10-13 and 17 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Regarding claims 4 and 10, the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest a method of adjusting image lighting on a preparatory image comprising generating preparatory light, determining an average preparatory image luminance and generating a supplemental strobe duration, wherein

the system is capable of generating a look-up table that stores image strobe durations and power values including a preparatory image strobe duration and an associated preparatory power value.

Regarding claims 5 and 11, the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest a method of adjusting image lighting on a preparatory image comprising generating preparatory light, determining an average preparatory image luminance and generating a supplemental strobe duration, wherein

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the system is capable of generating a look-up table that stores image strobe durations and power values including a preparatory image strobe duration and an associated preparatory power value.

Regarding claims 6 and 12, the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest a method of adjusting image lighting on a preparatory image comprising generating preparatory light, determining an average preparatory image luminance and generating a supplemental strobe duration, wherein

the system is capable of generating a look-up table that stores image strobe durations and power values including a preparatory image strobe duration and an associated preparatory power value.

Regarding claim 17, the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest a digital imaging system comprising a processor connected to a strobe and an image sensor coupled to a memory, wherein

the processor is capable of accessing a look-up table in the memory that stores image strobe durations and power values including a preparatory image strobe duration and an associated preparatory power value.

Conclusion


The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Takaoka teaches an image processing system utilizing light distribution; Steinberg et al teach an intelligent camera flash system.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rashawn N Tillery whose telephone number is 703-305-0627. The examiner can normally be reached on 9AM-6:30PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wendy Garber can be reached on 703-305-4929. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

RNT


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